

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAKAR 7977

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SG

SUBJECT: SENEGALESE LABOR UNION CONGRESS RESULTS IN COMPROMISE

1. SUMMARY THE CONFEDERATION NATIONAL DES TRAVAILLEURS DU SENEGAL (CNTS), SENEGAL'S LARGEST AND, UNTIL RECENTLY, ONLY, TRADE UNION CENTRAL, HELD EXTRAORDINARY NATIONAL CONGRESS IN DAKAR NOVEMBER 25-26. UNION PRESIDENT DOUDOU NGOM WAS "ELEVATED" TO POST OF "HONORARY PRESIDENT" AND POST OF PRESIDENCY WAS ABOLISHED. BABACAR DIAGNE OF UNION'S ORTHODOX WING WAS ELECTED SECRETARY GENERAL. AMONG MAJOR CONFEDERAL SECRETARIES GENERAL, SIGNIFICANT NUMBER REPRESENT REBELLIOUS FACTION HEADED BY MADIA DIOP. CONGRESS RESULTS, WHICH WERE LARGELY IMPOSED BY RULING PARTI SOCIALIST (PS), ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED A COMPROMISE. BOTH FACTIONS CLAIM SATISFACTION, BUT DIOP ELEMENT APPEARS TO HAVE GAINED SLIGHT EDGE. THIS SHOTGUN WEDDING MAY MEAN AN END TO YEAR-LONG IMMOBILITY WHICH HAS PLAGUED CNTS, OR IT MAY PRESAGE STILL MORE INFIGHTING. CONGRESS RESOLUTIONS REGRETTED U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM ILO, PRAISED SADAT VISIT TO JERUSALEM. END SUMMARY.

2. THE CNTS HELD ITS OFTEN DELAYED EXTRAORDINARY NATIONAL CONGRESS IN DAKAR NOVEMBER 25-26. NO OUTSIDE OBSERVERS WERE PERMITTED, AND IN CONTRAST WITH PAST TRADITION, NO

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FRATERNAL DELEGATIONS WERE INVITED. ATMOSPHERE WAS TENSE, WITH CONSIDERABLE BOOING, HISSING, AND FISTFIGHTS, EVEN AT TIME OF PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S OPENING ADDRESS. NO RECORD VOTES WERE TAKEN AT CONGRESS, AND ALL DECISIONS WERE HAMMERED OUT (OFTEN IMPOSED) BY PROMINENT PS MEMBERS SUCH AS OBEYE DIOP, MOUSTAPHA NIASSE, AND JEAN COLLIN.

3. MAJOR MEASURE TAKEN WAS "ELEVATION" OF CNTS PRESIDENT DOUDOU NGOM TO POST OF "HONORARY PRESIDENT." NGOM, WHO WAS HOTLY CONTESTED BY A REBELLIOUS FACTION OF CNTS HEADED BY FOOD WORKERS' MADIA DIOP, IS NOW REPORTEDLY IN RUNNING FOR POST OF AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE. NGOM'S TOTAL PREOCCUPATION WITH HIS OWN SURVIVAL HAD LED TO COMPLETE IMMOBILIZATION OF CNTS OVER PAST YEAR. NGOM PARTISANS WERE SOMEWHAT MOLLIFIED WITH NOMINATION OF SOMETIME NGOM LIEUTENANT BABACAR DIAGNE, TO POST OF SECRETARY GENERAL. POST OF PRESIDENCY WAS ABOLISHED.

4. DIAGNE IS WIDELY REGARDED AS VENAL, AND AMBITIOUS BUT IS A MORE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATOR THAN NGOM. DIAGNE IS A FREQUENT TRAVELLER TO INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES, WHERE HE IS A FREQUENT PARTAKER OF ARAB LARGESSE. AT SAME TIME, DIAGNE IS QUICK TO EXPRESS HIS FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD WEST IN GENERAL AND U.S. IN PARTICULAR.

5. AMONG DIOP FACTION MEMBERS GAINING POSTS AS CONFEDERAL SECRETARIES GENERAL ARE: DIOP HIMSELF AS VERITABLE NUMBER TWO MAN; BASSIROU GUEYE, PIERRE MEDOR (ADMINISTRATION), ALIOUNE CISSE (IDEOLOGY), ALIOUNE SOW, AND IBRAHIMA GUEYE. NGOM FACTION REPRESENTED BY SOGUI KONATE (EXTERNAL RELATIONS), MOHAMMED LY (ORGANIZATION), AMADOU SOULEYE SARR, SERIGNE DIOP, AND AMADOU LINDOR
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MBAYE.

6. SEVERAL OF TEN CNTS MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL REPORTEDLY BE DROPPED IN NEXT FEBRUARY'S NATIONAL ELECTION, WITH DIOP SUPPORTERS TAKING THEIR PLACES. NGOM ELEMENT BRAVELY MAINTAINS HE "LEFT WITH HIS HEAD HELD HIGH," BUT INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION IS THAT DIOP WAS ABLE TO FORCE PARTY POLITICAL LEADERSHIP (AND ULTIMATELY PERHAPS PRESIDENT SENGHOR) TO IMPOSE NGOM'S DEPARTURE IN FACE OF THREATENED BREAK-UP OF CNTS.

7. IN AFTERMATH OF CONGRESS, BOTH FACTIONS ARE EXPRESSING SATISFACTION WITH OUTCOME, AND TALKING OF DESIRE TO GET BACK TO WORK OF UNION BUSINESS. IF PARTY CAN MAKE COM-PROMISE STICK, OUTLOOK FOR END TO CNTS IMMOBILISM SHOULD BE GOOD. REPORTS ALREADY BEGINNING TO SURFACE, HOWEVER, THAT DIOP PLANS TO TAKE ON HIS OLD ARCH-RIVAL DIAGNE AT LEVEL OF CAP VERT REGIONAL CONGRESS (DATE NOT YET SET), THE SCENE OF THEIR LAST OPEN CLASH IN 1975. IF DIOP AND DIAGNE WILL NOT OR CANNOT WORK TOGETHER, THERE WILL BE STILL MORE INFIGHTING.

8. FINAL CONGRESS RESOLUTION, AMONG OTHER THINGS,
REGRETTED U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM ILO, AND EXPRESSED SUPPORT
FOR PRESIDENT SADAT'S "MISSION OF PEACE" TO JERUSALEM.

9. AALC MANAGED TO PICK UP QUICKLY BY INVITING FORMER
LEADER GRANTEE SOGUI KONATE, NEWLY-NAMED CONFEDERAL
SECRETARY GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS, TO AFL-CIO
CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES AT AALC EXPENSE. KONATE
LEAVES FOR U.S. DECEMBER 3.
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